

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STAFF NOTE

Action/Discussion Item:

Waiver Request of 704 KAR 3:305, Minimum High School Graduation Requirements from the Franklin County School District

Applicable Statute or Regulation:

704 KAR 3:305

Action Question:

Should the Kentucky Board of Education grant a waiver to the Franklin County Board of Education in order for them to grant a high school diploma to a former student unable to fulfill the current requirements?

History/Background:

Existing Policy. The Kentucky Board of Education has established the minimum high school graduation requirements as twenty-two (22) credits through 704 KAR 3:305. The requirements took effect beginning with the graduating class of 2002. Districts may add additional requirements, but each district's graduation policy must at least meet the minimum established in the regulation. The current credit requirement for high school graduation established by the Franklin County Board of Education is 27.

The Franklin County Board of Education requests a waiver in order to grant a diploma to a student who dropped out of school in 1966. At that time, the student had earned 17 ½ credits. The graduation requirements in 1966 were 18 credits. In 2004, the student attempted to earn a diploma after district personnel mistakenly communicated to the student that she would only need to complete the ½ credit lacking in 1966. The student completed the missing mathematics credit through the Franklin County Adult Education program. The student then learned that any student receiving a high school diploma beginning in 2002 must have earned the minimum of 22 credits and then the student requested a waiver from the Franklin County Board of Education. (The letter from Franklin County requesting the waiver is attached.)

The rationale presented by the Franklin County Board of Education includes the following:

- The district mistakenly gave the student information about current policy and the student made a good-faith effort by completing what she understood to be her missing ½ credit in mathematics.
- The student's life experiences over the last 39 years should be able to substitute for the 4 credits the student lacks.

Staff Recommendation and Rationale:

Staff does not recommend granting this waiver, as the Kentucky Department of Education does not consider life experiences a substitute for the requirements for high school graduation as established in 704 KAR 3:305. Granting such a waiver could set a precedent for considering life experiences in lieu of credits for any person not completing the requirements and result in numerous waiver requests. As an alternative to this waiver, the student has the option of pursuing a GED.

Impact on Getting to Proficiency:

Consistent application of Kentucky's minimum requirements for high school graduation is crucial to the state's continued efforts toward proficiency.

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Date:

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